COMPANY PROPOSING ALBERTA-MONTANA POWER LINE SAYS MOVE QUICKLY

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ALBERTA - Deadlines dominated the opening day of an Alberta Energy and Utilities Board hearing in Lethbridge, Alta., on a proposed electricity line from Alberta to Montana.

Two representatives of the company proposing the transmission line told the hearing Wednesday that the 240-kilovolt electrical transmission line must be finished by the end of 2008 to meet contractual agreements with several customers who will rent the line to market electricity from a planned wind farm project in Montana.

Bob Williams, vice president of regulation for Montana-Alberta Tie Line, said the hearing has to make its decision by early 2008 to allow construction to begin at several places along the line to meet the contracts that were recently extended to 2031 from 2022.

The company was created to take advantage of Alberta government policies and regulations and ship electricity to markets for its power generating customers.

Williams said the transmission line will introduce a new source of renewable electricity at both ends of the transmission line - almost like new generating capacity has been developed in southern Alberta.

He said that source of energy should lead to reliability and stability in electricity supplies, and continued economic growth in Alberta.